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In other words, a person going from a recognized school to a certified school can complete the work in one year, or in his going from a recognized to a standard high school, the work may be completed in two years, and all the benefits of graduation from a standard school may thereby be received. The organization of high schools on a basis of *standard*, *certified*, and *recognized* schools will undoubtedly lead to clearness and definiteness and be conducive to more effective work whenever high school work is undertaken.

In some cases one teacher has undertaken to do four years of high school work. This is a manifest impossibility. No teacher should attempt to do more than two years of high school work. As already indicated two teachers, except in rare instances, should attempt

not more than three years of work. Three years of work cannot be done satisfactorily by two teachers, unless a scheme of alternation of subjects is agreed upon and strictly adhered to.

It is possible for three teachers with proper classification of students to give fairly adequately four years of work.

In organizing schools according to the suggestions for *recognized*, *certified* and *standard* schools, it will be impossible to cover as many subjects as has been done formerly in many cases, but undoubtedly the quality of work will be greatly superior to much of the work done heretofore. Our effort should be to secure the highest order of work possible wherever any amount of high school work is undertaken.

## "ON BAGS OF GOLD"\*

By LAURA BELL EVERETT

Berkeley, California

**D**ID MR. Gradgrind in demanding "facts, sir, nothing but facts" lay the teaching profession under a spell from which it has never fully recovered? When schools and schoolteachers appear in fiction it is too often in caricature. If they appear in romance it is in order that they may furnish the unromantic background for the purpose of contrast.

It is, then, with something of surprise that one reads on in Ernest Poole's *Beggars' Gold* to find that Peter Wells, the hero, does not desert teaching for a more romantic calling, but remains to work out in his Americanization classes the truth of the parable from which the story takes its name: "we are beggars sitting on bags of gold." Peter, who "had known so many men who had failed often finer and more humanly appealing than those few who had won success," exclaims,

"How much we all have in ourselves, both good and bad, and how it's kept down. I wonder what the world would be like if every mother's son of us became what he might have been."

The background is a city school and the story does not leave the noisy school where Italians and Sicilians, Greeks and Armenians, Poles and Jews speak "terrific English." There Peter finds the heroine who is a woman so true to life that she does not fall in love with some one beside her husband, as heroines are now frequently forced to do by the exigencies of the novel that hopes some day to be a movie. There he finds, too, little Moon Chao, the Oriental sunbeam that lends some of the glamor of Cathay to the story. Moon Chao will delight both those who like the Chinese and those who do not know them.

The interviews Peter has with Roosevelt, and his writing of the great American's life form an episode of especial interest, though many would like a different ending.

The words with which a letter from Roosevelt closes: "I take off my hat to teachers. You have the greatest job in the land. At best I can only lead men. You can mold them," are not over emphasized. Were that the case one might feel that the book is only a pair of rose-colored spectacles. On the contrary it portrays the grind, the discouragements, the disadvantages, and while seeing these as they are, makes the teacher who has spent his whole life in the work, say, "see if you can't get a little pleasure out of this vale of tears . . . try to get over the idea that the whole job is drudgery," and "my own little dream of bumping the stars is dead but in others it lives on! The king is dead. Long live the king! And as I watch this feeling rise in thousands of young people, I'm always finding something new. I've got over the idea that I can do much to mold their lives. Instead of that I watch 'em all—just giving a hand to them now and then."

The book does not lend itself readily to quotation. It is really an organism and should be known as a whole, as a faithful picture of the life of the teacher who knows that the best things of life are the intangible ones. "We are beggars sitting on bags of gold."

\**Beggars' Gold* by Ernest Poole, author of *The Harbor* and *His Family*. The Macmillan Company, New York.

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### EDITORIAL COMMENT

#### *Durham Wins Aycock Cup*

By winning the Aycock Memorial Cup for two years in succession the Durham High School has earned a coveted honor among North Carolina High Schools and it has established a reputation in the field of debate that will remain one of its cherished traditions. Durham has been the winner over all comers in three of the ten annual contests held under the auspices of the Debating Union, but the cup has become its permanent possession by virtue of Durham's second successive annual victory. Here's congratulations to the Durham High School—its students, teachers, debaters, and their trainers. You have won a signal victory over worthy opponents, and the prize that is yours has been worthily awarded.

#### *Two Important Cases*

There are pending before the Supreme Court of North Carolina two cases that have direct bearing of the greatest importance on the State's educational program. The one is to determine the validity of the act authorizing the State to issue \$5,000,000 of bonds for school buildings; the other relates to the voting of special taxes for school purposes in consolidated districts.

Should the bond act be declared unconstitutional, most of the counties will find themselves in a most embarrassing financial condition. In the hope and expectation of getting State aid from this source, many counties have projected their building programs, have let contracts for new buildings, negotiated short-term loans through local banks, and proceeded with their work. To say they will be financially embarrassed is indeed to state the case mildly.

Should the second case be decided adversely, the consolidation program may receive a temporary set-back, though the result will not be so disastrous as would be an adverse decision on the bond act. An adverse de-

cision, however, will not affect the authority of the county boards to consolidate districts, but it will affect the voting of local taxes on consolidated districts.

Early decisions are expected in both cases. Further comment will be made on these cases in our May issue.

#### *The NEA*

The next meeting of the National Education Association will be held in Boston in July, and it will be an important meeting. Are you a member of the Association? Why not enroll now and make your plans to go to Boston in July?

#### *Summer School*

Again the time is at hand when wide-awake and progressive teachers are laying their plans for summer study and wide-awake and progressive summer schools are making their plans to accommodate the thousands of teachers that will seek admission. At this time all indications point to crowded conditions at all the larger summer schools of the country. A word to the wise should be sufficient. Select the summer school that offers you the best advantages and arrange early for your accommodations.

### THE HERFORD AESOP

A Child was found one pleasant day  
Reading a book of Verses gay.  
Of him, an Adult, chancing by  
Demanded what he read, and why  
He was not with his friends at play.  
The Child replied he'd rather stay  
And read his Aesop story book.  
The Adult said, "Come, let me look!"  
And then exclaimed, "Why this is done  
By Mr. Herford! Well what fun!"  
He took the book, turned with delight  
To drawings gay and verses bright.  
An hour passed, the Child now wept,  
"I want my book that you have kept."  
Alas, the Adult heard him not,  
The waiting Child he quite forgot,  
But not the book. He passed from view  
And took the Herford Aesop too.  
The moral, friends, is plain as pease,  
This Herford book is sure to please  
Both young and old—and I surmise  
That Mr. Aesop's pleased likewise.—E. D. S.